

Prophet Isma'il

Allah Glorified has bestowed Isma'il with the title "Keeper of promise".

Allah says:

And mention Isma'il in the Book; surely he was truthful in (his) promise, and he was an apostle, a Prophet.

And he enjoined on his family prayer and almsgiving, and was one in whom his Lord was well pleased. (19:54-55)

Imam al-Ridha has stated that Allah called him "Keeper of promise" because a man asked him to meet at a particular place. He kept his promise and waited there for a whole year but the man did not turn up.

Imam as-Sadiq has stated that Isma'il was the son of a Prophet. He preached to the people about Allah and His commands but they did not believe him. They kept enmity with him. Once his people beat him and removed the skin of his head and face. Allah sent his angel to him. The angel said, "Allah has given you His regards and has asked you about the people who have behaved very brutally with you and asks what kind of punishment should be given to them?" He replied that he did not want to take any revenge from the world. He was patient like Imam al-Husayn the grandson of Prophet Muhammad al-Mustafa.

According to another tradition once Bareed Ajali asked Imam as-Sadiq that people believed he was the son of Ibrahim but is Isma'il who has been given the title "Keeper of promise" the son of Ibrahim or someone else? Imam replied, "Allah had bestowed him with Prophethood in the presence of Ibrahim. He was the Prophet of that time. If there is one Prophet in the world, there cannot be another Prophet at the same time. Prophet Ibrahim was Nabi and not a Rasul.

Allah says in the Qur'an that he was the son of Hizqil. Allah had given him Prophethood among the people. They did not believe him. They behaved very brutally with him and removed the skin of his head and face. Allah became very angry and sent an angel of punishment named Satataeel to him. He asked the Prophet, "If you wish me to make the people fall in different kinds of punishment, I can." But the Prophet said that he did not want to give any punishment. Allah asked, "What is your intention?" The

Prophet said, “O Allah! you have promised that at the time of Raj‘ah, Imam al–Husayn will come again in the world and take revenge of his murderers. My wish is also the same. Allah agreed and promised him that: I will send you with Imam al–Husayn at the time of Raj‘ah.”

The Holy Prophet has stated that it is much better to take care of the people by good words, remove their evil deeds, and benefit the Muslims. “In The Israelites there was a man very religious and helpful to others. Once when he was going to the king for recommending some person he met Isma‘il bin Hizqil on the way. He requested him to wait for him until his return. When he reached the king, he forgot to come back to the Prophet. Isma‘il waited for him but he did not return. Isma‘il did not leave that spot and remained there only for nearly a year. By the grace of Allah some vegetables grew there for him to eat, a stream of water flowed by from which he could drink and there was a cloud to shade him. A king passed by that way. That man was with the king when they reached the place and saw Isma‘il still waiting. That man asked the Prophet if he was here all this time. “Yes,” the Prophet replied. For this reason, Allah has given him the title of “Keeper of promise”.

There was another man named Jabir. He claimed that the Prophet was telling a lie for whenever he passed by that way he had never seen him. The Prophet said he was lying and cursed him saying that Allah will take away one of the useful things from you. Right away, his teeth fell out. Then he accepted that he had lied and had unnecessarily blamed the Prophet. He requested the king to ask the Prophet to forgive him and ask the Prophet to pray for him to Allah for getting back his teeth as now he had become like an old man. The king requested the Prophet. The Prophet said he would pray for him the next morning. The Prophet prayed for him and he got back his teeth. Imam Ja‘far as–Sadiq says that morning is the best time for prayer. Allah also states that morning is best for prayers.

According to a tradition of Imam Ja‘far Sadiq, Isma‘il promised a man that he would wait for him. The name of the place was ‘Safa’ which is near ‘Makkah’. He waited there for one year. The people of Makkah searched for him but did not know where he was. Coincidentally a man reached the Prophet and said we have become old and weak without you and asked the reason for his isolation. He said that a man had promised to return so he waited there. When the people of Makkah heard this they went to the person named ‘Taifee’ and said that you have taken a promise from the Prophet but did not return to him. Hearing this, the man came running and apologized and said, “By Allah I had forgotten the promise.” The Prophet said that he would not have left the place until his death. Allah also praised him in the Qur’an and his title “Keeper of promise” is true.

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